RESTORATION REVIEW

That alone which saves men can unite them. That faith which the gospel requires of sinners is the faith which should unite saints. That confession upon which the believing penitent may be admitted to the blessings which Christianity confers should be the only test of orthodoxy and the only rallying cry amongst the hosts of the redeemed.

—Robert Richardson

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Adventures of the Early Church . . .

WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN THE EARLY CHURCH

Since both women and children have been generally deprived of both rights and attention in the cultures of the world, there is reason to look at them together in our study of the early church. Since the beginning of human history it has not only been an adult's world but a man's world. More often than not in the story of nations the woman has been subservient to the man, and it has been common for her to be denied such rights as citizenship, suffrage, equality before the law, and a place in the business world. Even though our own nation was born of democratic freedom it was not until 1870 that women had the right to vote, and even now they seldom receive equal pay for equal work.

The attitude often shown toward children is reflected in the way Jesus' own disciples treated the children that were brought to him. Supposing that Jesus was both too busy and too important to be bothered by children, the disciples rebuked those who brought children to be blessed by the Master's touch. It was not atypical of adults who presume that children are not to be in on things. They are not important and do not really count. The disciples turned the little ones away but for one reason, *they were children.*

This episode provides us with a penetrating insight into Jesus' sensitivity toward those who are ignored or brushed aside. Mark (10:14) tells us that Jesus was "greatly displeased" when the disciples treated the children as they did. And the occasion produced one of the most remarkable things Jesus ever said: "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them, for of such is the kingdom of God." It says much about the nature of the kingdom of God when it is likened to that part of humanity that is generally regarded as unimportant. Our Lord likened the kingdom to the very ones we are inclined to ignore. It is all the more remarkable that Jesus gives this place to children when he was in great distress and tension, for he was on his way to the Cross. He had time for children because he took the time. He saw in the little child the marks of God's reign in the hearts of people: trust, humility, forgiveness, obedience. It is not amiss to conclude that the most important person we will meet today is a child. How often we pass them by without notice!

The child is also vulnerable in that it is unashamedly open to the hurts and slights of those who are stronger. The kingdom of heaven is like that in that it is made up of people who are free of suspicion, intrigue, and dissimulation. Like children, those in the kingdom take chances with life's uncertainties. They even dare to love when love may not be returned.

With Jesus teaching what he did about the importance of the child, one would suppose that the New Testament would abound in references to children and their development. But this is not the case. It is an amazing fact that the New Testament says next to nothing about the training and teaching of children. Children are mentioned on Pentecost in that the promise of the Holy Spirit was for them as well as their parents (Acts 2:39), and Acts 21:5 reveals that children were present along with adults in bidding Paul farewell in Tyre. Both Eph. 6:1 and Col. 3:20 tell children to obey their parents in the Lord, and verses in both 1 Timothy and Titus require that an elder have faithful children.

There is not much more than that, though Eph. 6:4 does say that the father is to bring up his children "in the training and admonition of the Lord." Col. 3:21 urges fathers not to provoke their children lest they become discouraged. But the New Testament provides no details on how children are to be brought up. Some attribute this neglect to the conviction of the early Christians that the Lord would soon return and they saw no need to concentrate on training their children since they would not grow up in this world.

That is all the New Testament says about children except for one unusual passage in 2 Cor. 12:14: "The children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children." This is only Paul's way of telling the Corinthians that he does not want any of their material substance. He is their father in the faith, so he will give to them and not the other way around. He is only recognizing what is generally the case, that parents take care of their children and not the children the parents. We have here no injunction against children providing for their parents, which is sometimes necessary and of course the right thing to do.

So we have no educational program set forth for children and there is nothing about schools. The implication seems to be that the only school that matters is the home and the teachers are to be the parents. Our non-class brethren have a point since there is no intimation of a Sunday School in the New Testament.

Once we go beyond the New Testament to the so-called Apostolic Fathers, which takes us well into the second century, the material about children is equally meagre. Ignatius greets the children along with their parents in his epistles, and Clement says what the New Testament had already said with such as “Let our children partake of the training that is in Christ,” and he urges children to be humble and of a pure mind. Polycarp does the same in urging his readers “to train up their children in the knowledge and fear of God. “

The angel in Hermas says a little more since he found parents indulgent with their wayward children, so he exhorts them: “Do not cease, then, correcting your children, for I know that if they repent with all their hearts, they will be inscribed in the book of life with the saints.” The angel further assures Hermas what many a modern parent supposes of himself or herself: “But you, Hermas, had great troubles of your own because of the transgressions of your family, because you did not pay attention to them; but you neglected them and became entangled in their evil deeds.”

It is evident from both the New Testament and the Apostolic Fathers as well as the history of the times that the early church made no special provision for the education of its children, such as its own school system. Special instructions were laid out for new converts and for the church’s ministry but not for the children. One reason for this, as has been referred to, may have been the expectation of the imminent coming of Christ, which made the secular education of children irrelevant. They were also too poor to have built their own schools, and in times of persecution, which was frequent, it would have been impossible.

How then were their children educated in general studies? In the secular schools of the Greeks and Romans. While some of the church fathers, such as Tertullian, forbade Christians *teaching* in secular schools, where Homer and his gods were the curriculum, there were no measures against the children from *studying* in such schools, an interesting inconsistency to say the least.

By the fourth century the emperor Julian forbade Christians teaching in the schools of the empire, but still the Christian children could attend them. Julian’s persecution of the believers was curiously inconsistent, for while he turned from the harsher forms of persecution inflicted by his predecessors, he imposed such measures as not allowing them to be called Christians (They were to be known as despised Galileans!) and required that they offer a few pinches of incense to Caesar if they brought a case to court, which denied

them justice before the law. But in the end the claims of Christ proved too much for the embittered emperor. On his death bed he filled his hand with his own blood and flung it into the air, crying out, “That hast conquered, O Galilean.”

We must conclude, therefore, that the early church provided for the *secular* education of its children in the same schools attended by pagan children. Their *spiritual* training was in the home (more than in the church as such) with the parents as teachers. The case of Timothy is to the point, for his curriculum of study was the sacred writings (the Old Testament) and his teachers were his mother and grandmother. Two passages in 2 Timothy imply this. 2 Tim. 3:15: “From childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” And 2 Tim. 1:5: “When I call to remembrance the genuine faith that is in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am persuaded is in you also.”

The situation with women in the early church was not unlike that of children in that they too were deemed relatively unimportant. When Jesus fraternized with the Samaritan woman at Jacob’s well he not only broke down the barrier between Jews and Samaritans but also the barrier between male and female. John 4:27 says that his disciples marveled that he talked with a woman, which would suggest that even Jesus rarely had such an opportunity. Jesus’ forgiving attitude toward the woman taken in adultery also shows how his view of the equality of women stood in stark contrast to that of the religious leaders. While he named no woman an apostle, women were nonetheless among his companions, and it is not without significance that it was women who first proclaimed the good news of the resurrection.

Two statements from the apostle Paul strongly reveal how the early church sought to follow its Lord in the liberation of women. Gal. 3:28 declares that “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” In Christ man and woman are equal! It was a revolutionary concept in the ancient world where women were hardly more than chattel.

The other reference, 1 Cor. 7:4, is even more dramatic and surprising for its time: “The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does.” The first part of that statement would fly in the ancient world, but who would dare make the woman an equal to man in conjugal rights?

These judgments alone should spare the apostle from the charge of being either a misogynist or a male chauvinist. Moreover, like his Lord, he had no problem in working with women as well as men in the gospel, apparently making no distinction. ‘Of the 24 fellow workers he names in Romans 16, six of them are women. Especially noteworthy is Junius, who, along with Andronicus, is referred to as “having high mark among the apostles,” which might mean she was an “apostle” in that like Barnabas, who is called an apostle, she was sent forth on missions by the church. In the same chapter Phoebe is referred to as a deaconness (servant) of the Church of Christ in Cenchrea. We are left to wonder why it is today deemed a heresy for a church to have female as well as male deacons.

The apostle nonetheless in both 1 Cor. 14 and 1 Tim. 2 restricts the woman’s ministry, and it will hardly do to pass this off as simply a matter of custom. His prohibition against a woman speaking to the assembled church is apparently based upon the inspiration of the Spirit rather than the demands of custom. Dr. McKnight is probably right in concluding that when Paul says in 1 Cor. 14:34, “Let your women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak,” he means that it is Christ that does not perinit them to speak in the assemblies.

The apostle also argues that. “the law” requires submission on the part of the woman, which forbids her taking a leading role, though we cannot be sure what law he refers to. He goes on to make a third argument against it, that “it is shameful for women to speak in church,” which is an appeal to the natural modesty that is to characterize a woman. A fourth argument (v. 36) is that when the gospel was originally proclaimed it was done by men, that Christ did not select any women to be apostles.

However much one may disagree with Paul’s restriction, he should not dispose of it with such a superficial bypass as “He was dealing with the custom of the times.” The apostle appeals to what had been revealed to him and to “the law” as well as the instinctive judgment that it is indecent for a woman to assume man’s role. That has no ring of local customs to it. Moreover, he concludes such instructions in verse 37 with “The things I write to you are the commandments of the Lord.”

The same is true in 1 Tim. 2:11-12 where Paul enjoins that the woman is to “learn in silence with all submission” and “I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence.” This time Paul argues from the primacy of Adam and the fall of Eve. Again one might not like his hermeneutics, but we can hardly claim that it was all just custom.

Nor does it follow that Paul contradicts himself since in 1 Cor. 11 he allows the woman to pray and prophesy with her head covered. Paul never *allows* a woman to speak in the assembly with head covered or uncovered. All we can conclude from what he says in 1 Cor. 11 is that if a woman *does* pray or prophesy she should at least have her head covered. Even here the apostle is not motivated by oriental custom but by the creation story, by what is instinctively shameful, and even "because of the angels," whatever that may mean. No custom dictated that the man be uncovered when he speaks, but Paul nonetheless enjoined that too.

If I were a woman in the church today and respected apostolic or Biblical authority and were bent upon praying and prophesying in some public fashion, I would veil or cover my head. But I could not conclude that it would necessarily be with apostolic approval if I spoke in the assembly even with covered head. The injunctions in 1 Cor. 14 and 1 Tim. 2 are too plain for that.

Do we really want to accept what the Scriptures teach on such matters in these days of "women's liberation"? Is an apostle of Christ talking into his hat when he says, "But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God" (l Cor. 11:3).

He who says "In Christ there is neither male nor female" says "The head of woman is the man." These do not contradict. God has made man the leader (or head) among equals. Every institution must have order. The buck has to stop somewhere. In my home I have a responsibility that my wife does not fully share, for God has made me the head. But still my wife is my equal, just as God and Christ are equal when God is the head.

So it is in the church. We are equal, male and female, but functions can be different among equals. God has assigned the public ministry of the gospel to men, or so it was in the early church. Those who conclude that the intervening centuries make a difference, that it is now unrealistic not to give the modern woman her place in the pulpit, will find rationale for women preachers and evangelists. They might even call the apostle Paul names. Or they will quote the apostle when he gives women equality but ignore the restrictions he lays down.

I have a "modern woman" in a class I am teaching at the University of Dallas. A Roman Catholic, she is a student teacher with important professional ambitions. She could be described as a strong woman, mildly assertive. When the subject of women and the

church came up in our class, she expressed gratitude that the Vatican had not "budged an inch" on the matter of ordaining women priests. She told the class, "Men have a priestly function in the church that women do not have. I accept that and have strong convictions about it." I admired her position as not only Catholic (catholic?) but apostolic as well. She sees no contradiction in being a lecturer at a high school or a college or even a successful business woman and yet being "submissive" to an order that God has ordained when she assembles with the gathered church. She does not consider herself a second-class citizen in the kingdom of heaven.

But we do deny our sisters their equality in the church when we apply the restrictions of *public* ministry to the church's larger life and work. And here you may call me a woman's "libber," for I believe our sisters have an equal vote in elections, they should serve on any and all committees and even chair them, their advice should be sought and even insisted upon, and they should serve as deacons and teachers in the church's educational program. They should help plan the whole of the church's life and ministry.

Indeed, the public ministry (public proclamation of the gospel) is but a part of the church's total ministry. We have not even begun to be creative in what our sisters can do and should be doing. They certainly have a place on the professional staff with various and sundry ministries.

Now and again I am told that if Jesus came to this troubled world in this century rather than 2,000 years ago that he might well have chosen some women as apostles, as if modern women are more "with it" or freer than the likes of Mary Magdalene. Well, he might and he might not. What matters is what he did when he came, and Paul for one sees it as significant that he chose only men, basing his injunction for woman's silence in the public assembly on that fact (and not on custom!), as per 1 Cor. 14:36.

In this 20th century are we to walk by sight or by faith? — *the Editor*

IS THE SHORTEST VERSE THE GREATEST?

Most of us are aware that" Jesus wept" (Jn. 11:35) is the shortest verse in the Bible. I am suggesting that it might also be the greatest, in some respects at least.

I have memories about Jn. 11:35 that go way back. In my youth when I conducted services in the country, sometimes under a tent and sometimes under a brush arbor, I had special services for the kids before the main program got under way. I would tell them stories and each of them would stand and quote a verse from the Bible, which was probably more than most of their parents could do. “Jesus wept” must have been the only verse some of their parents knew, for that was by far the most-quoted. It is easy enough to memorize.

It did not bother the kids that they often had the same verse as the one who went before, and so I was inundated with “Jesus wept,” one after another. But one fellow was embarrassed, as the story goes, when he was a guest at dinner where everyone was expected to quote a Bible verse. The one sitting next to him quoted the only verse he knew, “Jesus wept.” When it came his turn he blurted out, perhaps irreverently, “He shore did!”

We may not be irreverent toward this well-known verse, but we may take it too much for granted and thus allow its great significance to pass us by. It is a crucial passage, first of all, because it dramatically points to the humanity of our Lord, and that in a book that emphasizes his deity. Even the apostle John, bent upon showing that Jesus is the eternal logos that was God, includes an incident in his account of the gospel that underscores the utter humanness of Jesus. While the apostle assures his readers that “He was in the beginning with God,” he likewise describes Jesus in terms strictly human. Jesus was a man, one who wept in the face of sorrow. The scene in which Jesus is described as weeping pulsates with emotion. There has been a death in the family. Jesus comes from a distance four days later so as to be with his bereaved friends, Mary and Martha, who are stunned by the passing of their brother Lazarus. For some reason Mary supposed that her brother would not have died if Jesus had been present. This she said to Jesus through her tears, and when Jesus saw her tears he too wept. Even though he knew something that Mary did not know, that her brother would be restored to her within the hour alive, still he wept. He wept because someone he loved was hurting.

At this point in the story the apostle tells the reader something that is a bit baffling: “When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her, also weeping, He was deeply moved in spirit and was troubled” (v. 33). The original language for these words could mean that Jesus “was indignant in spirit and shook himself,” as Lenski renders them, or they might mean that “his heart was touched, and he was deeply moved,” as the *Good News* version renders them.

If it means that Jesus became indignant or angry to the point that his body shook with emotion it must be because he saw the awful toll that sin and death take. In the face of a weeping world Jesus knew the cause to be the lethal weapons from Satan's arsenal, sin and death. That he was indignant in the presence of death's apparent victory is suggested by the fact that he immediately asked the whereabouts of the body of Lazarus, as if he were ready to undo Satan's victory.

If the apostle means to tell us that Jesus' heart was so profoundly touched that his body trembled with emotion, which is more likely, then we have one of the most precious descriptions of our Lord. It reveals how deeply he feels the pain of others. If he was in anguish when on the Cross because of his own pain, he is here in anguish over the pain of others. When he saw how deeply grieved Mary and her Jewish friends were, he was so smitten within that his body visibly trembled. When he turned toward Lazarus' tomb at Mary's direction, the record tells us that Jesus wept. It is noteworthy that the Greek word for Jesus weeping is different than the word that describes the weeping of the others. Theirs was a loud, audible sobbing, while his was silent weeping, with tears rolling down his cheeks as he made his way to the tomb. While his body was wracked with anguish in the presence of human suffering, still he was composed. He wept gentle tears.

The story of Jesus weeping with those that weep (cf. Rom. 12:15) reveals far more than the humanity of our Lord, for it assures us that there is heartbreak in the heart of God. God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, 2 Cor. 5:19 tells us, and Philip. 1:15 describes Jesus as "the image of the invisible God." Jesus himself told one of his disciples that "If you have seen me, you have seen the Father also" (Jn. 14:9), and added those startling words, "I am in the Father and the Father is in me."

When Jesus weeps the God of heaven weeps, and when Jesus agonizes over the sins and sufferings of fallen humanity the God of heaven also agonizes. We can hardly understand how this is, for the creator of heaven and earth is a God who hides himself, as the prophets tell us, and his ways and thoughts are not our ways and thoughts. And, of course, God has no tear duct glands and he has no body that shudders in the face of the human predicament as Jesus had. But that is the point. We see God in Jesus Christ, and we know what he is like by looking at Jesus. If Jesus weeps — and what glorious news it is that Jesus weeps when we weep — then we know that the heart of God is also broken for us. When we see Jesus weeping we know that God cares.

There was at least one prophet who saw this mother-love of God. Hosea 11 is a kind of "God wept" parallel to the weeping Christ of the New Testament. It starts with "When Israel was a youth I loved him" and goes on to tell how God taught him how to walk and took him into his arms. God even healed his people when they did not know it, the prophet says, and he led them with bonds of love. The mother-love comes across dramatically when the prophet adds, "I bent down and fed them," which are among the most consoling lines in all the Bible. The God of heaven, whom the same prophet says is indeed God and not man, bends down to care for his troubled people.

The prophet pictures God in agonizing tears when he realizes that he must send his people into captivity and yet he cannot bear to give them up. If you have ever had to give up a child in death, you can appreciate what the prophet is saying about God. We sometimes have to do what we cannot bear to do. God feels that way about his people. God speaks through the prophet: "How can I give you up, a Ephraim? How can I surrender you, a Israel." Then he adds — and, mind you, the prophet speaks of him "who is God and not man, the Holy One in your midst" — "My heart is turned over within Me, all My compassions are kindled."

This means that the God of the Old Testament is more than creator and judge. He has mother-love toward his people. He is full of pity and eager to show mercy. It wounds him when he has to punish his people. That line in Hosea says it all, *God bends down and nourishes his people.* He is a God who weeps.

This is the picture we have of Jesus as he approaches Jerusalem, a city that was "blind to the things which make for peace," on his way to the Cross: "He saw the city and wept over it" (Lk. 19:41). As God bent down to help so Jesus bent down to help. When judgment had to be exacted for the ultimate good of mankind, deity did not harden and say "That is what you deserve!" When Israel was taken into captivity and Jerusalem destroyed, deity wept.

We can walk by faith in a world that is blind to the things that make for peace when we believe there is heartbreak in the heart of God. That great British theologian James Denny, who was also a powerful preacher, had a way of holding his arm high above his head, allowing it to represent the Cross as he described the suffering of Christ. Pointing to the Cross with his other hand, he would cry out to his audience as only Denny could, *That is how God loves!*

When we see Jesus weeping we can say *That* is *how God loves!* He is the same, yesterday, today, and forever. Jesus still weeps. He not only knows when we are hurting but he hurts too. His tears led to victory, for he overcame the world. As we follow the Man of Sorrows we too have the victory, tear-stained though it be. —*the Editor*

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TOWARD UNITY: A BASIC FALLACY TO OVERCOME

Most of us concede that the primitive church was united. If it consisted of splintered sects there would be little reason to "restore" it. While present-day scholarship points to the diversity of the New Testament church, it nonetheless recognizes a basic unity in that diversity. There was racial diversity in that some were Jews and some were Gentiles; there was social diversity in that some were rich and some were poor, some were free and some were slaves. There were ideological differences in that some came out of paganism, and were slow to give up some of its practices, while others had strong Judaistic foundations, and they too clung to some of its ritual after becoming believers. There were also theological differences, some being "liberal" and others "conservative."

It strikes us as unlikely that one "Church of Christ" minister would circumcise another as a religious rite, and yet this was the case with Paul and Timothy. Nor is it likely that a "gospel preacher" would finance and take part in a service at the Jewish temple in which vows were made, heads shaved, and sacrifices offered, as the apostle Paul did.

And if we are in search of the pattern church to restore, we have our problems, for we have everything from speaking in tongues and baptism for the dead to communal living and love feasts. It can really be haunting to realize that members were struck dead for their sins, as in the Jerusalem church, or sickened and died for "not discerning the Body," as in the Corinthian church. Do we want to restore that kind of retribution to the 20th century church?

The fact is that we are not all that much like the primitive churches, but, then again, they were not much like each other. There are some vast differences between the church in Jerusalem and the one in Corinth. And when we take the congregations across the board we can hardly come up with a consistent *Order,* whether in reference to organization, name, corporate worship, or life style.

But still we can speak of their unity, which goes far in identifying the nature of unity. It certainly cannot mean seeing everything eye to eye. Paul could lay down the principle, *All are one in Christ Jesus*, as he referred to the diverse elements (Gal. 3:28). If in that context he could write "There is neither male nor female," which points up the greatest diversity of all, considering the status of the woman in Paul's culture, then we in the 20th century should be prepared to accept the church as united that is very diverse.

Once we grant the unity of the earliest church in spite of its considerable diversity, we are left with the question of the ground upon which it was united. Herein we can identify the basic fallacy, especially among Churches of Christ/Christian Churches, in our efforts toward unity. It is the assumption that unity is based upon the New Testament, which is made to mean a particular interpretation of that portion of Scripture. Even though we are divided into different camps in reference to it, we insist that there is an identifiable *Order* in the New Testament, and when we "restore" that Order we have unity. That such a plea has never been effective and has left its own advocates divided several different ways does not impede its advocacy.

That unity never has been and never can be based upon a common understanding of New Testament literature is evident enough in the story of the primitive church. The early Christians were united and yet they did not have what we call the "New Testament." How could their unity be based upon what they did not even have? The only Scriptures that the earliest Christians knew anything about was the Old Testament, which can hardly be seen as the basis of their unity and fellowship. Even with the close of the first century there was no recognized canon for the New Testament, and it was at least another century before there was anything like a mutual acceptance of what constituted the New Testament.

Even when there was a "complete" Bible it could hardly be the basis of unity for the simple reason that the rank and file did not have access to it. The blessing we have of looking up something in the Bible goes back no further than the fifteenth century and the invention of the printing press. Even then however the vast majority of believers were too poor to have a Bible of their own. Throughout most of the history of the church the New Testament has not been sufficiently at hand to serve as the bond of union among Christians.

To be sure Christians through the centuries, including those of the earliest church, gathered to hear the Scriptures read, which gradually came to include the New Testament. But this hardly provided for the detailed knowledge of doctrinal issues that is demanded by those who make such knowledge the basis of fellowship. One could hardly be blamed

for not being “up on all the issues” when he had no Bible of his own to study. We can only conclude that the contextual knowledge of the earliest Christians of what we now call the New Testament was very limited. Their faith was centered mostly in the fundamental facts of the gospel and what they could learn about Jesus Christ from those who had known him.

This can only mean that Jesus Christ himself was the basis of their faith and the ground of their unity. It was not so much ideas or doctrines about him that united them, but the Christ himself. While we can believe they sought out every crumb of information about Jesus, whether the miracles he wrought or the parables he taught, they did not have to attain a perfect understanding of such things in order to “sanctify Christ Jesus in your hearts as Lord.” The person of Christ is larger than anything and everything that was written about him, and it was this, *what Jesus was,* that gave the church both its unity and its power.

In whatever generation it is the faithful response to Jesus’ call “Come, follow me” that makes us disciples. When those who became his apostles responded to that call they did not know much *about* Jesus, but they knew him. Even when we do not yet know much about the church or baptism or prayer we are Jesus’ disciples when we resolve to forsake all and follow him. Surely we are united with all others who take that same step.

This does not minimize the body of doctrine that the early church eventually came to believe. It only puts it in proper perspective. Sound doctrine strengthened the unity and deepened the fellowship. It built up their faith and buttressed their hope. But it was not the basis of their unity in Christ or their fellowship with each other, for this would have restricted unity and fellowship only to those with a certain level of understanding. They were all enrolled in the school of Christ because of their mutual response to the gospel, but they were at different grade levels. To change the metaphor, some were on milk and some solid food. But as in our own families the babes and the mature are one, not because of their level of knowledge but because they have the same parents.

There we have the essence of it. Wherever God has children we have brothers and sisters. We are all united in Christ if we be his disciples, not because of anything we have done but because of what God has done. God’s retarded children are as much my sisters and brothers as the bright ones. Even those who out of weakness follow Christ afar off are my spiritual kin. I have brothers in error as well as brothers who are right about everything.

That unity is based upon agreement on the New Testament is a fallacy because it is something that never has been and never can be. As late as 200 A.D. there was still no New Testament canon and some "books" we now accept as Scripture were still treated as doubtful. It wasn't until about 369 A.D. that there was an accepted New Testament such as we now have. It therefore could not have been the basis of the church's unity up to that time. Even if there had been such a New Testament then as we have now, and even if there was perfect agreement on its content, such unanimity could never have been the basis of Christian unity. If a book could have done it, any book, then Christ would not have needed to die.

Thank God that he did not give a book to save the world, but he gave himself in the form of a Person. That Person is the ground of our faith, the basis of our unity, and the source of our hope. There is a Book, a glorious revelation, that tells us of that Person. But it is the wonderful Person of the Bible rather than the Bible itself that unites us. That Book is like a map or a telescope by which or through which we see the Christ. We tragically err when we lose Christ in the Book, allowing some set of "faithful doctrines," which are often only the opinions of some sect, to eclipse the very one the Bible was intended to reveal.

Robert Richardson, one of Alexander Campbell's associates, summarized the argument I am making in this essay with a pungent one-liner: *That alone which saves men can unite them.* If we could have understood that simple truth it would have saved us the heartache of scores of divisions. It points up the truth that we should make nothing a test of fellowship that God has not made a condition for going to heaven.

But Richardson says some other things that relate to the thesis I am making herein. I will close this article with several quotations from his piece on "Reformation" in the *Millennial Harbinger* (1847), p. 508f.

"Men seem to have lost sight of the obvious distinction which is to be made between the Bible and the Gospel."

"It should never be forgotten that the Apostles and first preachers of the gospel had no Bibles, and not even a New Testament, to distribute; and that there was no such thing among the early Christians as a formal union upon the 'Bible alone.' Nay rather it was a union upon the Gospel alone."

"Let the Bible be our spiritual library; but let the Gospel be our standard of orthodoxy. Let the Bible be our test of Christian character and perfection, but let the Christian confession be our formula of Christian adoption and of Christian union. In a word, let the Bible be to us every thing designated by its Author, but let 'Christ crucified' be not only our peace with God, but our peace with one another." —*the Editor*

Everyone can see the seed in the apple, but only a few see the apple in the seed.

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Highlights in Restoration History . . .

PROFANITY IN THE PULPIT AND ELSEWHERE

I suspect Alexander Campbell was referring to his father when he wrote in the 1836 *Millennial Harbinger:* "One of the most devout and intelligent Christians I have known, seemed always to pause before he pronounced the name of God." This is reflective of the high esteem he had for Thomas Campbell's piety. Elsewhere he tells of how he would enter his father's bedroom when the old man was blind and unaware of his son's presence, only to hear him praying to God and profusely quoting the psalms. Walter Scott said of Thomas Campbell that he was the most pious man he had ever known.

Piety certainly implies deep reverence toward God. That a person would take the name of God with such respect that he would pause before speaking it is reminiscent of the way the Jewish scribes hallowed the name Yahweh, which they would not only not pronounce but would also take a ritual bath before writing it into a manuscript. While that may impress us as fastidious, we should be impressed that some of God's children through the centuries have taken piety seriously.

When Campbell made the above statement about his father he was writing a series on *Reformation* in which he set forth the goals and principles of his life's work. While he sometimes also used the term *Restoration,* usually as a synonym, *Reformation* was his favorite term in describing his efforts. One reason for this is that he believed if the ancient order was to be restored to the life of the modern church it had to include piety and goodness in the lives of its members, *reformation of life,* he called it.

In this particular series he writes somewhat of preachers and the pulpit, and he is distrubed over the lack of spirituality and piety that he witnessed. While he complains of profanity in the pulpit, he is not referring to cursing or swearing but to an insensitivity toward things and persons. In one installment he says:

> To see a young man who cannot do more than parse a common sentence of the King's English, mount the stand and lampoon all the Rabbis and Doctors, all the commentators and critics of a thousand years, as a set of fools or knaves — as a pack of dunces or mercenary imposters — is infinitely more nauseating than lobelia itself, and shockingly repulsive to all the finer feelings of our nature.

It is well to have a dictionary at hand when one reads Campbell. By *lobelia* I think he refers to a flower that has a bad odor. So he is saying that the behavior of some preachers in the pulpit stinks! To him this is a kind of profanity. He goes on to refer to a person, young or old, who will appear in the garb of a preacher of righteousness "with the flippancy of a comedian, courting smiles instead of wooing souls to Jesus Christ." He observes that he does not like to follow in the trail of one of these "religious mountebanks" whom he describes as sending forth more offensive odor than "Solomon's dead fly in the anointment of the apothecary," for they turned away the ears of the people. He did have a way with words!

This profanity in the pulpit, he believed, is also seen in the familiarity with God that the minister sometimes assumes. He puts it this way: "Such speakers seem to think, if they think at all upon the subject, that their standing before the people in the attitude of religious teachers, gives them a license to speak of God as familiarly and unceremoniously as they speak of man, or of the most common things."

In this context Campbell makes an interesting point. The more we reverence God, he says, the less we will reverence men, and the more intimate our knowledge of God the more our reverence toward him will increase. Such a one will approach the throne of God and use his name with the most profound homage and respect.

When Campbell remembered how his father took the name of God with the deepest reverence, he was led to say: "What a contrast this, and the random and galloping flippancy of some religious teachers, whose style rather diminishes or destroys, than inspires a reverence for that great and dreadful Name which fills heaven with adoration and eternity with praise!"

Here we see that old Calvinistic, Presbyterian piety that influenced our founding fathers, an influence we have not sufficiently felt in our generation. If Americans generally can be accused of being impolite and crude, as I have heard some foreigners charge, the Christians in America can be accused of being shallow and irreverent when it comes to religion.

Take our own churches on a typical Sunday morning, and here I take Campbell's charge of "profanity" in the pulpit a step further and include the people. We chatter about all sorts of things, whether the stock market or politics, or the Cowboys right up to the moment "Worship" starts. While there is a place for small talk, one would think that if believers are sensitive to the fact that "the gathered church" is meeting with its Lord in holy fellowship there would be a sense of awe and reverence. It is an appropriate time to speak of Christ to each other in one way or another. P. D. Welshimer, one of our great spiritual preachers a generation ago, had a delightful way of saying, "How glorious it is to be a Christian!" We ought to hear things like that when we gather in the vestibule awaiting a service rather than how the big game that day will go. There is a time to be quiet and wait upon the Lord. We know far too little about awe and reverence

I like that line in Ps. 107:2, *Let the redeemed of the Lord say so!* When one reads the psalm he will note that in three places the believer is urged to "Oh, that people would give thanks to the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!" Let us say so in our homes, at work and at play, and when we assemble as the church. Let us practice the presence of God.

Our reverent pioneers, who were awed by the presence of God, might see us as "profane" when we work all day without any thought of God and then spend the evening watching TV without ever saying so. Certainly the psalmist urges us to thank God for his goodness and to praise him for his wonderful works.

When the gathered church shows such awe and reverence, and when they speak to each other of God's goodness and his marvelous works, then there will be less shallowness and more reverence in the pulpit.

Profanity! We have a rather narrow view of it. We might be shocked at the suggestion that the cursing sailor or the swearing drunk is not nearly as profane as some Christians who show casualness, familiarity, and flippancy toward the God of heaven.

Let the redeemed say so! Let them say it and show it everywhere. —*the Editor*

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THE NAME OF THE FATHER

By W Carl Ketcherside

In John 17:6 Jesus declares that he had manifested the name of the Father unto the men given to him out of the world. It is an interesting observation. The word “manifestation” in our language literally means “struck by the hand.” That which one feels becomes evident, apparent or obvious. In the Greek it is *phaneroo,* a word which always has about it the quality of light. “Whatsoever doth make manifest is light” (Ephesians 5:13). Jesus turned the flashlight on the name of God. He held the lantern so they could see plainly what was involved.

We use a name simply for identification. It meant much more among the Jews. It was used by them to describe the sum of all the attributes which made up nature or character. It refers to the qualities or traits which distinguish an individual. “To manifest the name” of the Father, meant simply to demonstrate to the men the mighty power and purpose of God’s name. Demons were cast out in that name (Mark 9:38). Mighty works accompanied it. The apostles belonged to God before they belonged to Christ. God gave them to Jesus. It was the Spirit of the Father which spoke in them (Matt. 10:20). The expression “kept thy word” means more than to merely have in possession. It is used for Peter being *kept* in prison (Acts 12:5). It is used of the guards who *kept* the door (Acts 12:6). It means to guard, to stand watch, to protect.

As a result of the closeness and intimacy with the apostles they knew the origin of all things that Jesus had received. The authority, the power, the teaching, were all from the Father. The words which he gave them convinced them of the divine origin of Jesus. They believed that he had been sent of the Father. In reciprocal love Jesus prayed for them. He did not pray for the world. It is interesting that the word world is *kosmos.* It refers to the universe as an orderly system, the created world in symmetrical beauty. Our word *cosmos* is derived from it, a flower of exquisite orderly beauty.

In this instance, Jesus did not pray for all the inhabitants of the world, although God loved them (John 3:16). But he had been given certain ones out of the world, and he prays for them specifically. This does not indicate any less interest in the world. It is only as the select group of apostles functions faithfully that the world has any chance of being rescued

and saved. He points out that “all mine are thine.” This should be true of all. But the reverse “all thine are mine” could be said only by Jesus. Glory accrued to him from the fact.

We now learn the meaning of “the hour is come.” Jesus’s span on earth is over. He has finished the task assigned to him. He is returning to the Father and will be in the world no longer. He is leaving the region of the created for the realm of the uncreated, the presence of the Father. But the apostles will remain in the world. They will be subject to its brutality and misunderstanding, its sorrow and death. His work is being committed to human hands. And He prays that God will keep them through His name. All of the power, energy, protection and loving care that are part of the divine character will be directed toward their preservation for the supreme task now being left in their hands.

Nothing is more important than their oneness. For more than three years Jesus has “discipled” them. The “sons of thunder”, the tax collector for Rome, the Galilean zealot, all of the motley group that walked and talked with him. They have observed, watched and studied his methods. They have absorbed and assimilated his approach to the human predicament. But all of this will go for nought if they prove to be unable to work together in mutual respect. Men require not only an admonition to be one. They also need an example. Precepts are important and idealistic, but we need something practical to use as a model or pattern.

No greater demonstration of oneness is found in the universe than that which exists between God and Christ. “That they may be one *as we are.”* We must aspire to divine oneness in the midst of a strife-torn world. In spite of our varied personalities, often distorted and disintegrated, we must seek earnestly to bring them under the reign of Jesus that we may be one with others. Often, without realizing it, we seek to be one on our terms. We must abandon all such stubborn fancies and seek to be one on *his* terms. What a difference it makes when we sit down amid turmoil and ask ourselves, “What would Jesus do in my situation?”

When Jesus used the three little words “as we are,” he was pointing to the only perfect oneness between two individuals in the whole universe. Both were sinless, infallible, and unfailing. We can aspire to the oneness which characterizes them. It gives us a goal. It provides meaning of life. The fact that we will not attain it does not lessen its importance as that for which we always strive.

Jesus and the apostles were a close unit while on earth. Their humanity motivated the men to say and do strange things. A gentle rebuke put them in their places. They were kept, not in the name of Jesus, but guarded in the name of the Father. This shows its protective power. The only one lost from the intimate little circle was "the son of perdition." It is interesting that Jesus does not designate him by name. Perdition is from *apoleia*, destruction. It is once rendered damnation in 2 Peter 2:3. The scripture which was fulfilled is a good example of two-fold meaning in the fulfillment of prophecy, for Jesus may have had reverence to Psalm 109:8. But the fact that it was divinely-interpreted, as well as divinely-given, is assurance enough for us.

In any event, Judas was the only one of the apostles who was a Judean, as was Jesus. The rest were Galileans. Iscariot was not a second name. It meant "man of Kerioth," a small town in Judea. He was the only one who was lost! *—4420 Jamieson, Apt. 1C, St. Louis 63109*

OUR CHANGING WORLD

Some 200 preachers have signed "An Expression of Concern" over two matters: liberalism and the unresolved controversy over the teaching of evolution at ACU. The statement appeared in the August issue of *Restorer,* Gary Workman, editor. The statement identifies liberalism as (a) drifting from the Bible-centered, definitive, distinctive doctrine that once characterized our preaching; (b) the tendency to denominationalize the body of Christ; (c) compromising truth and fellowshipping blatant error; (d) worldliness in the church; (e) emphasis on recreation and entertainment. As for the controversy at ACU, the preachers feel that those in charge have swept the issue under the rug and they call for an impartial investigation.

The Central Church of Christ in Irving, Texas will present its First Annual Choral Festival next June 6. Churches are invited to bring their choral groups for the one-day festival, and there will be classes taught by noted musicians. Choruses need to register by Dec. 1. Call Reid Lancaster at 214-259-2631 or write to the church at 1710 W. Freeway, Irving, TX 75062.

Word and Work is published by the premillennial Churches of Christ and is well worth the reading, not only to keep up with the important thinking and activity of these people but for a consistent outlay of good reading. Alex V. Wilson is now the editor. The sub rate is $5.00 for the year; the address is 2518 Portland Ave., Louisville, KY 40212.

In a folder entitled *The Basis of Christian Fellowship*, Keith A. Price writes: "We believe it more scriptural to reflect a heart of love ready to find a covering for faults, than to constantly look for that with which we may disagree. We will then be known more by what we witness *for* than by what we witness *against."* What a liberating truth that is!

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BOOK NOTES

The Fire That Consumes by Edward Fudge may upset some of your thinking about hell and the destiny of the soul. His thesis that immortality is God's gift to the righteous and not a characteristic of the soul is impressively defended. He contends that hell is a consuming fire and not an eternal fire. You will be challenged. $21.00 postpaid.

How to Preach More Powerful Sermons by Homer Buerlein is an excellent way for a preacher to get critical feedback from the pew. A communications expert rather than a preacher, the author lays out stuff that can change a minister's life in the pulpit. I agree with the professor of preaching at Southwestern Baptist Seminary when he said, "If you don't read this book, the loss is your's — and your congregation's." $10.95 postpaid.

Who Do Americans Say That I Am by George Gallup Jr.. is a report on what Americans believe about Jesus Christ and the impact he has on their lives. Based upon various Gallup polls. we gain insight into what our neighbors really think about Jesus, the church, and what religious values they hold. Gallup's concluding chapter on what such information means to the church is a sobering challenge, for it concludes in part that we are willing to argue for our religion, write for it, even die for it — anything but live for it. $9.95.

We have a fresh supply of two old favorites by K. C. Moser, *The Way of Salvation* and *The Gist of Romans,* which have probably made our people more aware of the depths of God's grace than any other books. They are $5.95 each postpaid.

For only $3.00 we will send you 18 back issues of this journal, selected at random for many years back. We make this offer so as to acquaint our more recent subscribers with what we have been saying through the years.

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